

He later held an internship at the Statehouse while attending Boston University, then worked on successful reelection campaigns, first for Gov. Michael Dukakis and then U.S. Rep. Barney Frank, D-Newton. He worked on a Senate campaign in Oregon, as well.

Solmonese succeeds former Sen. Cheryl Jacques, who stepped down from her Attleboro-area district to lead the Human Rights Campaign in January 2004. She resigned Nov. 30.

Solmonese, whose mother and sister live in Attleboro, took the helm just days before a trial court judge in California ruled on March 14 against that state's same-sex marriage ban, calling it unconstitutional and comparing it to archaic segregation laws.

It's a ruling that resonates in Massachusetts, which has been in the vanguard of the struggle for equality.

It was the first in the nation, in November 2003, to give gay men and lesbians the same access to marriage licenses as heterosexual couples.

Solmonese' predecessor, Jacques, married her longtime partner in August in Boston, days after she addressed the Democratic National Convention calling for "marriage equality." The couple were wed under Massachusetts' high court historic decision, a decision that was long overdue here and continues to be elsewhere.

Appeals are certain in California. But each step forward brings closer what surely will be the eventual right of gays and lesbians across the country to attain equal footing in the eyes of the law.

We congratulate Joe Solmonese, whose father, Joseph, was principal of Norton High School for several years until his death, as he sets out across the country to carry his message.

"We seek the same rights and responsibilities as all other Americans," Solmonese said, upon his appointment. "Our job is to educate the American people as to what equality means."

#### HONORING THE AMERICAN AIR POWER MUSEUM IN FARMINGDALE, NEW YORK

##### HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 5, 2005*

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the contributions of the American Airpower Museum in Farmingdale, New York to the commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the liberation of American POWs at the end of World War II.

Sixty years ago this spring, over 100,000 American and Allied POWs were liberated by Soviet troops as they swept aside enemy forces in Eastern Europe. This liberation marked the end of forced marches, stinging cold, constant hunger and the everpresent threat of summary execution by a collapsing Nazi regime. Simultaneously, advancing Allied forces also discovered Hitler's death camps and their wretched legacy of inhumanity.

As we observe this anniversary, I am truly proud to have the American Airpower Museum at the Republic Airport in Farmingdale in my congressional district. The museum has established a new permanent tribute to honor those who endured the POW "stalags" and to solemnly mark the liberation of the death camps built by the Third Reich for the purpose of murdering millions of European Jews.

The museum's tribute includes a recreated watch tower and barracks, a detailed diorama of a German "stalag," the names of those New Yorkers who were POWs during World War II and a tribute to American POWs in other conflicts. This will mark the first permanent museum tribute to American POWs in the New York region.

It is vital that we continue to remember the horrors of the Holocaust and pay tribute to both the victims and the brave soldiers who contributed to the liberation of Europe from Nazi rule. I strongly commend the leadership that the American Airpower Museum of Farmingdale has taken on this issue and urge other museums to follow suit.

#### RECOGNIZING FLOWER MOUND HIGH SCHOOL'S NAMING TO THE GRAMMY SIGNATURE SCHOOL GOLD LIST

##### HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 5, 2005*

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Flower Mound High School, located in the 26th Congressional District of Texas, for its recognition on the Gold List of Grammy Signature Schools.

I congratulate Flower Mound High School's performing arts department, under the leadership of Danna Rothlisberger, Lewisville ISD director of performing arts, and Mark Rohwer, chair of the performing arts department, for their outstanding achievement. Flower Mound High School was only one of seven schools in the nation promoted to the Gold List from their original recognition as a Grammy Signature School.

Flower Mound High School received \$7,000 cash reward for its performing arts department as part of their promotion. Mr. Rohwer has promised to spend a portion of the money to hiring composers to write specific pieces for the band, orchestra and choir, and to buy new equipment.

Flower Mound High School's performing arts department is a stellar example from which Texas schools should model their performing arts departments. Their commitment to educating students through the arts is to be admired and replicated.

I am proud of the education system in Texas; especially our involved parents and teachers at Flower Mound High School who commit their lives and time to fostering growth in their students.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF WILLIAM "SLIM" SOMERVELL

##### HON. MARILYN N. MUSGRAVE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 5, 2005*

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of Willis "Slim" Somervell, who has dedicated his life to God, his family, and the United States of America.

Slim has said, "You need to be true to yourself and you need to have beliefs and a value system. Without those, what are we?" These

are wise words. As I learned about the life of service that Mr. Somervell has led, I am inspired by his beliefs and his values.

Service to America is one value Slim holds dear. He entered the United States Navy in 1941. In 1944, Slim was commissioned as a gunnery and navigation officer for the USS *Landing Ship Medium* 142.

In addition to having command of the *Landing Ship Medium*, he also commanded *Patrol Craft* 1262, which conducted air and sea rescues in the Caribbean. He was also Executive Officer of the *Patrol Craft Escort* 877.

Slim worked in the Fleet Weather Center in Washington, DC and conducted Navy weather research in Norfolk, Virginia. He served on the *Forrestal*, CVA-59. He was also the staff meteorologist for the commander of the U.S. Second Fleet, later for the Western Pacific 7th Fleet and ultimately commanded the Navy Research Facility in Norfolk, Virginia.

Devotion to family is another value that is important to Slim. While on assignment in Monterey, California, he met his wife Mary. They married in 1949 in Kerrville, Texas. They had five children, four girls and one boy. Slim and Mary are now grandparents of thirteen.

Slim will often tell you, "What more can a person ask for than children and grandchildren who turn out to be good citizens." As you can tell, Slim is quite proud of his family.

After 30 years of faithful service to our country, Slim retired. But this did not slow him down. Slim took a job with the Bureau of Reclamation in their cloud seeding program. Later, Slim worked for the Department of Atmospheric Science at Colorado State University. Slim spent 15 years in that department as a manager, researcher and also a teacher.

In addition to service to family and service to our country, Slim also strongly believes in service to God. Slim and Mary attend Saint Joseph's Catholic Church in Fort Collins, Colorado. There, Slim serves as a lector and a communion minister.

Slim has been truly blessed with a great career and a great family. I invite my colleagues to join me in honoring Mr. Somervell. May God continue to bless the Somervells for years to come.

#### A TRIBUTE TO MAE CATHERINE GREENE

##### HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 5, 2005*

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of Mae Catherine Greene in recognition for her dedication to her community.

Mae Catherine Greene fondly known as "Cat" by family and close friends is almost a life long resident of the east New York community of which she has been an integral and staunchly loyal advocate. She was born in Chadbourn, NC in March of 1957, the ninth of ten children of a proud and independent working mother.

Mae obtained her education in the neighborhood she so greatly loves and admires. She attended P.S. 149, I.S. 292 and William H. Maxwell High School in east New York. Mae, who has been married for almost 27 years to her childhood sweetheart, Richard Greene, is the proud mother of six children who still live in east New York as well.